

Chapter 9

Communication

CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION

The word communication has been derived from the Latin word communis meaning to share. It is the exchange of idea or messages or information, as by speech, signals, writing, or behavior. It is the continuous process of exchanging the facts, ideas, thoughts, and feeling between individuals or groups. It is essence of leading decision making, coordinating, and motivating. It is considered as life-blood of organization. Communication should be understood by receiver in the same of sender. The correct understanding of the message is important from the point view of organizational effectiveness. The greater the degree of understanding more is likelihood that the human action will precede in the direction of accomplishing goals. Communication can be formal, informal, interpersonal, and non-verbal.

Communication is the act of conveying information for the purpose of creating a shared understanding. It's something that human do every day. Coordination organizational activities can be brought through communication. It is the key of coordination. Communication brings meaning and links people together. It enhances motivation and helps to compare actual performance with standard and take corrective action in time.

Business communication is communication that promotes a product, service or organization; relays information within a business; or functions as an official statement from an organization.

Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another person. It is a way of reaching others by transmitting ideas, facts, thoughts feeling, and values.

-Newstrom and Davis

Communication is defined as the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another.

- Leonard J, Kazmir

Communication means an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, information, emotions between two or more persons.

-Newmann, Charles Summer, and Kuirky Warren

In conclusion, communication is the process of exchanging ideas or thoughts or feelings or facts between or among individuals or groups. Effective communication reduces delay, misunderstanding, conflicts and increases efficiency, skills. Effectiveness, profitability and productivity. It is a continuous process, which includes sender, encoding, message channel, decoding, receiver and feedback. it is essence of managerial activities.

Importance of Communication

1. **Smooth working of organization:** It depends on effective communication. Whether big or small or medium or private or public or government, communication plays a vital role in all organizations. For examples if you go to any organization, you can find its staff busy in phone or any other forms of communication. Similarly, in other organizations also you can find same. Communication should be flown at right time, for right person, and through right channel to be effective. In the lack of effective communication, it becomes difficult to implement order and direction due to which there may appear organizational conflicts.
2. **Basis of decision making:** Communication is primary requirement of decision making. It helps to make quick and rational decision. Quick and rational decision helps to utilize business opportunities and also helps to face challenges or threats. Communication also helps to implement decisions effectively and efficiently for the organizational success by transmitting decisions to the implementation level. Thus, effective communication is the basis of decision making.
3. **Basis of planning and coordination:** Communication is a two-way traffic. It is basis of planning and coordination. It plays an important role planning and co-coordinating in management. Communication provides all kinds of reliable, complete, and up-to-date information through suitable channel for effective coordination. Organizational activities need good planning and effective coordination to achieve organizational goals. Without communication no planning and coordination is possible.
4. **Increases managerial efficiency:** Communication helps to increase managerial efficiency. Management conveys goals and targets, gives directions, issues instructions, delegate authorities, and looks after the performance of subordinates with the help of effective communication. It helps to reduce cost of production and increases productivity and profitability. Thus, communication is much more essential to increase managerial efficiency.
5. **Increase in employee's morale:** Effective communication is necessary to enhance employees' morale. The employees got opportunity to express easily as well as openly their feeling thoughts, ideas, wants, and suggestions to management. It makes, analyzes draws correct conclusion, and take proper steps to solve their problems. Besides, there does not appear any conflict between management and employees, and if it appears, it can be managed easily. The employees get satisfied and become happy and enthusiastic. They become dedicated to the organization for the achievement of organizational goal.
6. **Basis for managerial functions** Communication is basis for managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing and controlling. Managerial functions require extensive communication among the executives and the other personnel. We cannot do managerial functions without effective communication. Every work requires communication.

STRUCTURES OF COMMUNICATION

1. Formal structures: Formal communication structure consists of downward structure, upward structure, horizontal structure, and network structure.

- **Downward structure:** Ideas and messages follow from the upper levels of the organizational hierarchy and move down towards the bottom levels in downward communication structure. Top level management can communicate goals and delegate authority regarding achieving those goals. Orders, directions, circulars, notices, etc. flow in downward communication structure.

- **Upward structure:** Upward communication is the flow of ideas or message from lower level to higher levels in the organization. It helps employees to express their requirements, ideas, and feelings. It occurs when information flow upper the hierarchy from subordinates to their superiors. Reports, grievances, requests, etc. flow in upward communication structure.

- **Horizontal structure:** The exchange of ideas or message between persons enjoying the same or equal status in the hierarchy of an organization is horizontal communication. Ideas or message exchanges between department and functional units as a means of coordinating their activities in horizontal structure of communication.

- **Network structures:** Chain network, wheel network, circle network, and all channel networks are the main network communication structures.

Chain structure: The idea or message flows step-by-step in chain network communication structure until it reaches its final designation. Idea or message is passed straight up or down in the line. It follows chain of command.

Wheel structure: The wheel network structure is a centralized structure of communication. The leader is very clear and controls line of communication in wheel structure. Members cannot communicate with each other, hence perhaps low overall satisfaction. Member accepts leader's authority and command.

Circle structure: The circle network structure is a decentralized structure communication. It is more democratic. It has fewer organization roadblocks and is better employee access to each other. In the circle structure ideas, experiences and beliefs are shared equally among all members of network.

All-channel structure: An all-channel network communication structure found in teams. Each member of team communicates with every other team member. Information flows in all directions in all-channel communication structure. It is an elaboration of circle network structure.

2. Informal structures: Informal communication structure consists of diagonal structure grapevine structure.

- **Diagonal structure:** The exchange of ideas or message among different structural levels within an organization is diagonal communication. It is cross-functional communication between employees at different levels of management. It reduces the chances distortion by encouraging communication between the relevant parties. It also reduces a manager's communication workload.

- **Grapevine structure:** Grapevine communication structure stretches throughout the organization in all directions irrespective of authority levels. It is more effective. It carries message rapidly. It is a supplement in those cases where formal communication doesn't work. It does not follow official path of

communication, thus, it is not considered trustworthy. This structure consists of gossip chain, cluster chain, single stand chain, and probability chain. It is an informal or unofficial channel of communication.

Communication Process

Communication should achieve the desired result but there may be many hurdles in achieving objectives, if the correct process of communication is not adopted. It requires that the process of communication be planned in advance. The communication process contains following steps:

1. Message: Message is information and may be in the form of script. It is what the communication is all about. It can be ideas, information and emotions. Communication is not possible without message.

2. Sender: Sender is the first element in the communication process. The sender wants to communicate his ideas in the form of communication. Before the ideas are given practical shape, the sender should consider it thoroughly as to what, why and how he should communicate.

3. Encoding: The second step is to encode these ideas in simple, clear and brief words or codes. He has to decide the method of communication, whether verbal or written. Encoding refers to giving ideas in the form of communication.

4. Message Channel: The communicator has to decide the most appropriate means of communication or message channel, whether face to face contact, letters, information, messages, telephone or telex. While deciding the appropriate means of communication, psychological, financial, legal and emotional aspects should be considered.

5. Decoding: It is a process by which the receiver of message wants to understand the theme contained in the message. Sometimes messages are in code words, in that case decoding will mean converting it into sentences with the help of codes.

6. Receiver: This is one who receives the message and shows a particular response. The success of communication depends on receiver's response. Company management is concerned with how well the message performs in terms of encoding and response by the receiver.

7. Feedback An effective communication system should also have the provision of follow up and feedback. The communicator should keep in touch with the target audience and ascertain, whether it has reached the desired individual. He should also have the knowledge of the reactions and actions taken by the receiver.

8. Noise: Anything that does not contribute to the communication process is known as 'noise'. Noise is interruption or interference, which makes it difficult for the receiver to decode a message.

Because of the noise management may not be able to encode and design the message. Problems may appear due to language, style, and environment. Such problems should immediately overcome. Otherwise, it adversely affects organizational communication.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

1. Principle of clarity: Message should be clear. It should not contain double meaning nor be dubious. It should be understood clearly and the words should be easy and have a single meaning. If the receiver does not understand the message, it becomes meaningless. If it gives wrong meaning, it adversely affects the organization. Clear message becomes effective and saves both time and costs. A message should also be short, complete, and attractive.

2. Principle of participation It is the prerequisite of communication. Without participation communication cannot be complete and useful. The message should be so fascinating that the receiving side is interested and becomes eager. If the receiver does not show interest, the communication or message becomes meaningless, because there should be both the sender and the receiver to complete the communication.

3. Principle of adequacy: Communication should be adequate and complete. Inadequate communication brings confusion and delay in performance, which adversely affects organization. The main content of the message should be clear. Similarly, the points that help the main intent should also not be missed. Each message must have a clear and logical conclusion.

4. Principle of consistency: Communication should be consistent with plans, policies, programs, and goals of the organization; otherwise, it becomes contradictory. Symbol or words, or gesture should be arranged according to business and social norms. Communication should be in accordance with facts, form, or characteristics previously shown or stated. It should not contain a contradiction.

5. Principle of motivation. It should motivate employees towards performance. Clear, consistent, adequate, and polite languages motivate employees. Receiver must understand the message in the same way as sender intended to be motivated. Likewise, objective of communication must be clear for employee motivation.

6. Principle of feedback. Feedback mechanism brings effectiveness in communication. It eliminates contradiction, doubtfulness, and misunderstanding in message. As a result, communication becomes effective. Thus, feedback mechanism is very essential for effective communication.

Barrier to Effective Communication

There are several obstacles that tend to distort the flow the messages. Such distortion leads to misunderstanding and frictions among the members of the organization. These barriers do not permit healthy human relationships and they are injurious to teamwork and morale. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze, and remove the barriers to communication. Tile various barriers to effective communication are as follows:

- Physical Barriers
- Psychological Barriers
- Organizational Barriers
- Semantic Barriers
- Technological Barriers

(1) Physical Barriers: Physical Barriers are environmental factors that obstruct the communication. They include following that factors:

- a. Distance:** It refers to the distance or gap between message sender and it receiver. Long distance obstructs in communication. It makes the transfer of message difficult. Similarly, communication cannot be made between the places where no modern means of communication have reached. For example, Kathmandu to jumla in Nepal.
- b. Noise:** It is also a physical element to disturb communication. It arises due to external forces. It interferes with successful communication. It adversely affects business communication. It hampers in both sending and receiving messages.
- c. Physical Arrangement:** It is also the main physical element to disturb communication. It blocks communication. For example, a wall or partition between people in the office designs.
- d. Organizational Structure:** Complex structure in tall organizations serves as barriers to Communication. Distortion happens when the communication flows through multiple layers of organizational structure.

(2) Psychological Barriers: Psychological factors are the prime barriers in inter-personal communication. They are also known as emotional factors. The message described to depends upon the emotional or psychological status of both the parties involved in communication. The following are important examples of psychological barriers:

a. Selective Perception: It is a process by which individuals organize and interpret the sensory impressions in order to give meaning to anything. It may be different from person to person. Different people understand the same message differently and explain differently. The sender's unique perception creates difficulty for the receiver in catching the intended meaning of the signs used.

b. Emotion: The emotional factors, such as anger, fear, terror, hate, mistrust, jealousy, embarrassment, love, etc., of receiver also influence the understanding the message sent by sender.

c. Distrust: It is the negative feeling of receiver. If the message and message sender is distrusted by receiver, communication is obstructed.

d. Filtering: It is a process when sender deliberately wants to withhold information from reaching the receiver. It is done by manipulating the information either because the sender believes that all the information is not required or that the receiver is better off not knowing certain aspects of the information. Filtering takes place when subordinates send information to superiors based on the liking of the latter. Boss is told what he likes to hear. Therefore the information may be far from the truth.

e. Behavior: Human behavior is also a psychological factor to obstruct communication. If the receivers do not care the message, sender's trust on them may fall down.

(3) Organizational Barriers: Organizational barriers arise due to inadequate or improper policies, rules and facilities regarding communication. Such organizational barriers are:

a. Poor Planning: For the effective communication, the planning should be proper in terms of message design, encoding, and channel selection. The channel should be proper according to the size and nature of message. If there is poor planning about these, the message may not be effective.

b. Complex Structure: In a complex organizational structure, there are several levels of authority. Formal communication has to pass through this chain (proper channel). As a result there are delays

and distortions in communication. At every level, the message may be twisted or altered intentionally. Such filtering is more common in the case of upward communication.

c. Status Differences: The placing of people in superior-subordinate capacity in the formal organization structure also blocks the flow of communication and more particularly in upward direction. Greater the difference between hierarchical positions in terms of their status, greater would be the possibility of communication breakdown.

d. Time and Technology: A person must evaluate the timing of sending a message. Receiver must get adequate time to implement the instruction given in the communication. If the action on the message is required to be taken in a distant future, there is a possibility that receiver may forget the content of the message. Inadequacy of timing and a last minute communication is the likely to put too much pressure on the receiver. Message therefore should be sent at an appropriate time. On the other hand, lack of information technology facilities also serve as a barrier to communication.

e. Lack of Feedback: Feedback completes the total communication process. Feedback is important to ascertain if the message is understood and acted upon correctly. Lack of it or wrong feedback is counterproductive to effective communication.

(4) Semantic Barriers: Semantic barriers refer to the interpretation of words, abbreviations and symbols used by the sender and perceived by the receiver. These barriers arise from the linguistic capacity of the parties involved in communication. If a receiver is likely to misunderstand symbol of dollar, (\$) it is better that "dollar" is written in the script. Universally accepted symbols should generally be used in the written communication. Choice of wrong word or a comma at Wrong place can change the meaning as to what is intended to be Communicated, and interpreted by the receiver. It is always desirable to repeat an important part of the message and ensure confirmation from the receiver. The following are some common form of semantic barriers:

a. Ironical Language: It refers to satirical language. Ironical languages become difficult to understand. The message sent by sender in difficult language cannot be easily understood by its receiver due to which the communication becomes ineffective.

b. Complex Words: It is often found that technical personnel and special groups tend to develop a special, peculiar, technical and complex words and language of their own. This increases their isolation from others and builds a communication barrier.

c. Sign and Symbols: Many kinds of sign and symbols are used in communication. The sign and symbols should be carefully used deep considering their meaning whether the receiver can understand or not. If the receiver does not understand the message sent, it becomes meaningless. Thus, wrong use of sign and symbols is also a barrier to effective communication.

(5) Technological Barriers: They consist of defect in technology used and overload in information. Some of technological barriers are as follows:

a. Information Overload: Information may be passed to concerning individuals as it is needed. Excessive information causes information overload. Though, lot of information now can be handled by the individual due to computers. Excessive information causes confusion and may not be required. Network breakdown may also take place due to information overload.

b. Mechanical Barriers: Such barriers are concerned with mechanical devices used in the communication process. Technical faults in telephone line, defects in computer software, internet network problems, etc. are some examples of mechanical barriers that create barrier in communication.

c. Loss of Transmission: Mainly a verbal message when it is in course of transmission may lose some of its main contents. Likewise, due to limited memory power of the receiver, there is also a possibility of loss of content of the message. They obstruct communication.

d. Insufficient Period Allowed: Lack of sufficient time also cause barrier in effective communication. Some messages need quick response. However, due to lack of sufficient time, managers may not be able to analyze information in detail and its formal channel of communication. In such a situation, he may respond to a message without considering the subject matters and its importance. This also creates problem in effective communication.

The above communication barriers obstruct free flow of communication and understanding. It is very necessary to take effective measures to overcome these barriers and to improve communication.

Types of Communication

1. Formal Communication

- Upward communication
- Downward communication
- Horizontal communication
- Network communication
- Chain network
- Wheel network
- Circle network
- All channel network

2. Informal communication

- Grapevine communication
- Diagonal communication
 - Single stand
 - Gossip Chain
 - Cluster chain
 - Probability

3. Interpersonal communication

- Oral communication
- Written communication

4. Non- verbal communication

1. **Formal communication** Message transfers through official or formal channel in formal communication. It takes place through the formal channels of the organization structure along the lines of authority established by the management. Formal communication refers to vertical and horizontal communication that flow path specified by the official hierarchical organizational structure and related task requirements. Forms, policies, procedures, rules, memorandum, minutes of official meetings, reports, directions, requests, face to face conversations, and so on are the examples of formal communication. It maintains the authority relationship in an organization. Formal communication is generally cumbersome (awkward) and time consuming. Well defined rules and regulations, chain of command, delegation of authority, use as a reference, recognition, task related, routine communication, cooperation and coordination, and status symbol are the main features of formal communication.
2. **Informal communication** Informal communication is not official communication. It takes place in the informal groups involved the in organization. It built informal social relationships among members of the organization. It does not flow lines of authority as is the case of formal

communication. But it helps to maintain of the authority relationship in an organization. It arises due to the personal needs of the members of an informal group of the organization. Normally, it is oral and may be expressed even by simple glance, sign, or silence. For example, co-workers may meet outside the work environment at a picnic or a party and discuss areas of common interest that may or may not be work related. Information may then be passed on to each other about happenings in the organization such as layoffs, the organization's vision, mission, goals, strategies, and so on.

- 3. Interpersonal communication** Interpersonal communication is exchange of information between two or more people. It is the process by which people exchange ideas, message, and feelings through oral or written form.

• **Oral communication:** Oral communication is the process of express of expressing ideas by word of mouth. Face to face talks, direction, order, discussions, telephone talks, lecture or speech, public gathering, conference, meeting, interview, counseling, public speech, radio, television, film, etc. are the examples of oral communication. As face to face oral communication becomes more effective. It becomes easy to understand the audiences. Quick decision becomes possible in emergency through oral communication. Neither time nor money is wasted in oral communication. So, it becomes clear and cost effective.

Advantage

- (i) It is time and money saving,
- (ii) It becomes comparatively effective,
- (iii) It is easy to understand,
- (iv) It expresses spontaneous thought,
- (v) Its feedback becomes effective,

Disadvantage

- (i) oral communication cannot have evidence and records,
- (ii) long message becomes difficult to communicate orally and cannot be effective,
- (iii) more or less wrong meaning and wrong understanding may take place in oral communication, because it becomes difficult to read facial expression, stress, tone, etc. of the speaker while s/he is communicating orally are the negative aspects of oral communication.

• **Written communication:** Written communication is the process of expressing ideas by written form. Newspaper, bulletin board, report, letter, questionnaire, form, memo, rules, and regulations, etc. are the examples of written communication. Written communication should be understood by receiver by reading. Written communication becomes effective and can be presented as evidence if needed any time

Advantages

- (i) it can be presented as evidence at any time if needed
- (ii) it can be kept to use as reference in future
- (iii) it becomes more useful for long message and data communication
- (iv) written communication can be examined/ checked

- (v) it has no possibility of wrong meaning, wrong understanding, contradiction are the positive aspects of written communication

Disadvantages

- (i) it takes time and expenses,
- (ii) it has no opportunity for feedback
- (iii) it lacks secrecy,
- (iv) it brings unnecessary formality in personal relation,
- (v) it encourages delay making,

4. **Non-verbal communication:** Non-verbal communication is the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless cues or signals between people. It represents two-thirds of all communication. It is very powerful but less comprehensible form of communication. Expression by face, by moving body, physical contact, signals, or tone change, sound change, etc. are non-verbal means of communication. According to a research, 55% messages are communicated through facial expression and body movement, 38% messages are communicated through sound or tone change, and the rest 7% messages are communicated through other means. The research has also shown that the managers use mainly three types of non-verbal means in nonverbal communication. They are image, setting, and body language. The manager should be careful to the importance of non-verbal communication and its future impact. For example- If the manager wants to give good message to employees about rewards, if, it becomes wrong, it affects adversely.

ENHANCING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. **Improvement in listening skill:** Good listening habit helps to understand better and to establish good relationship with others. One should carefully listen others, focus attention to the sound, language, stress, emotion, etc. of the speaker. If anything is unclear or cannot be understood, the listener should be clear by asking the questions to the speaker prevent any physical obstruction (block) and should not draw any conclusion without being clear about what the speaker meant.
2. **Development of writing skill:** Good writing skill prevents linguistic (language) obstructions. A well written message makes the receiver understand it and there does not remain any possibility of wrong meaning. It ends the wrong explanation of the message. So, writing skill should be developed to enhance effective communication. The following aspects should be paid special attention to developing writing skill:
 - Simple and easy words should be used, difficult or complex words should be avoided.

- Messages should not be made unnecessarily long. It should be complete in short language. The main message should not be missed. It should be spontaneous and sweet
 - All the things intended to communicate should be orderly and sweetly written so that the receiver can easily understand. Messages should not be written in a untidy manner. It should be written in paragraphs
 - Messages should be clear, understandable, sweet, easy, and short, and should contain a single meaning. It should not be satirical.
3. **Creation of trust and confidence:** The psychological elements such as fear, terror, threats, anger, hatred, jealousy, etc. create obstruction in communication. So, such psychological obstructions should be avoided through creation of trust and confidence. For this, there should be mutual relationship and trust between sender and receiver. If trust and confidence are created, positive thinking takes place in both the sender and receiver. As a result, effectiveness increases in communication.
 4. **Avoiding noise:** Both internal and external elements obstruct effective communication. So, such elements should be clearly identified and mitigated. Message should be given at proper time, otherwise noise disturbs communication. So, messages should be sent neither on haste nor fast. If the channel of communication is not appropriate, noise obstructs communication. So, appropriate communication channel should be used according to the importance and urgency of the message. Organizational structure should also be made appropriate to overcome the noise. Effectiveness in communication can be promoted by restructuring the organization.
 5. **Avoiding overload:** If the message is long and tedious to understand with large volume, becomes overload for the receiver. The receiver's interest is killed by the overload of the message. As a result, effectiveness of communication declines. So, overload should be avoided to make message interesting and effective.